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(54) Abstract Title
 A vehicle having a visual display unit with a touch-sensitive screen

(57) A visual display unit 10 is disclosed for a vehicle which is arranged in use to display a screen picture 12 including one or more icons 14. The visual display unit 10 comprises a touch sensitive screen and the or each icon 14 provides on-screen touch sensitive control of a function of a vehicle system.

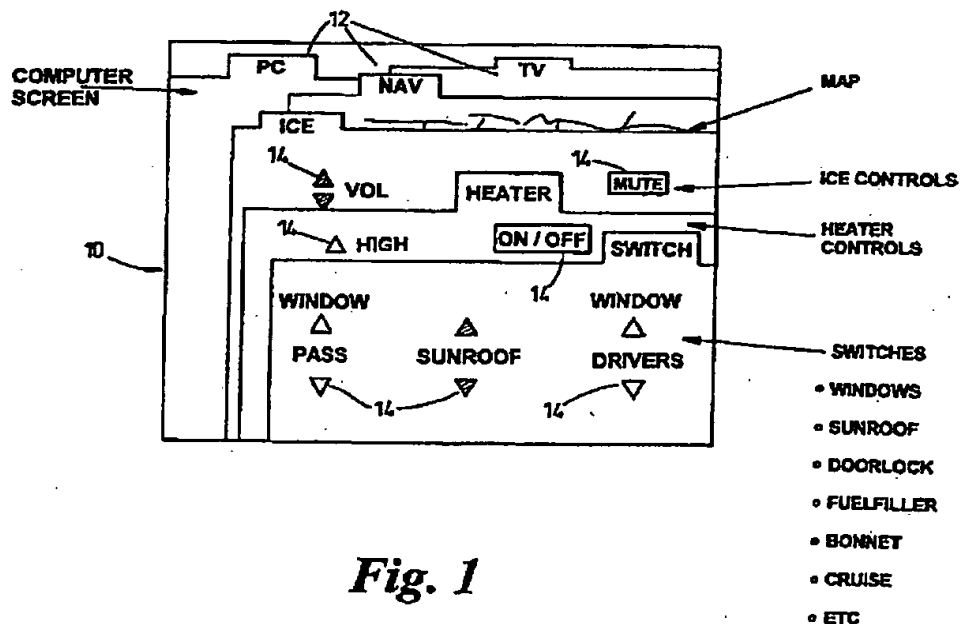


Fig. 1

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At least one drawing originally filed was Informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

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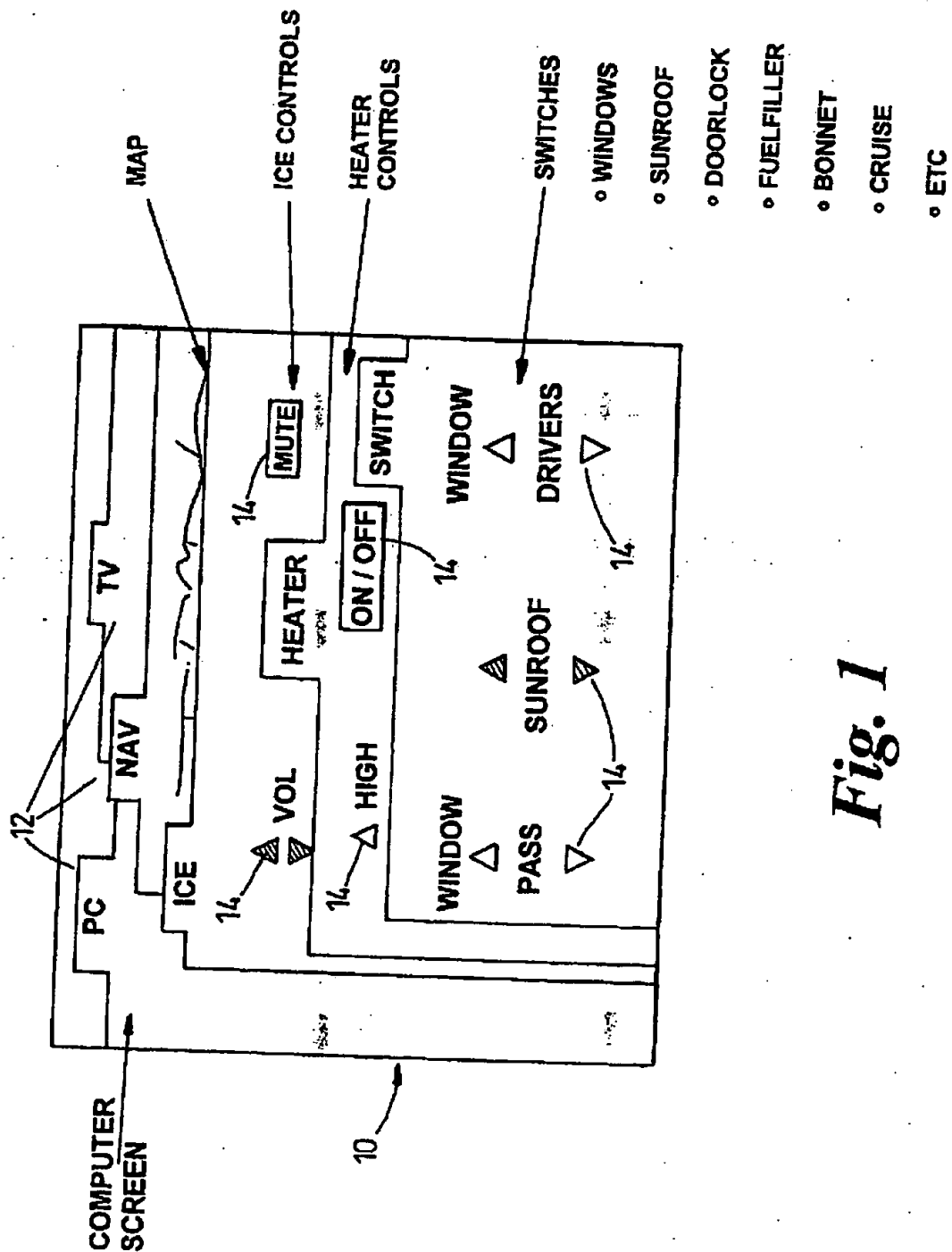


Fig. 1

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A Vehicle

This invention relates to vehicles and in particular to a vehicle including a visual display unit (VDU).

It is becoming increasingly more difficult to package the number of switches and associated wiring necessary to manage the ever increasing number of systems
5 fitted to modern vehicles.

It is an object of this invention to provide an improved vehicle.

Accordingly, the invention provides a vehicle including a visual display unit (VDU) which is arranged in use to display a screen picture including one or more icons, the visual display unit comprising a touch sensitive screen and the or each
10 icon providing on-screen touch sensitive control of a function of a vehicle system.

The or each icon may represent and perform the function of a switch means for controlling a feature of its associated vehicle system.

The visual display unit may be arranged in use to display selectively a screen picture from a catalogue of screen pictures, each page of which catalogue
15 represents a different system of the vehicle.

The indexing of said screen pictures may be displayed in the form of a simulated card index and selection between said screen pictures may be by touch sensitive control of index titles.

The vehicle system or systems may comprise at least one of: in-car
20 entertainment controls, navigation system controls; heater controls; window lift motor controls; fuel filler flap controls; bonnet release controls; and cruise control controls.

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The invention also provides a visual display unit for a vehicle according to the invention.

The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

5 Figure 1 is a representation of a visual display unit (VDU) fitted to a vehicle according to the invention.

Referring to the figure, a visual display unit 10 fitted to a vehicle (not shown further) is arranged in use to display a screen picture from a catalogue of stored screen pictures 12.

10 The screen 10 comprises a touch sensitive screen and the screen pictures 12 are displayed in the form of a card index and selections are made between them using touch sensitive selection of the index title.

The screen pictures 12 represent different systems of the vehicle such as; in-car entertainment control ICE, heater controls, navigation system NAV, television
15 controls TV, personal computer controls PC, window lift controls, sunroof controls, door lock controls, fuel filler flap controls, bonnet lock controls and cruise control. It would be possible to include screen pictures of further systems as required.

When pulled up, the screen picture 12 for a vehicle system displays a series of icons 14 which comprise a touch sensitive implementation of switch controls for
20 features of that system. For example, window control icons could be used to provide control for passenger windows PASS, sunroof controls and driver's window.

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By way of further example, heater controls could comprise heater increase high, on/off, etc., and in-car entertainment controls ICE could include volume controls VOL and a mute button.

The advantage of this invention is a reduction in the number of discreet
5 switches for controlling vehicle systems thereby saving space and cost. It may be found that some systems are preferably controlled using additional technology. One example of such a system would be the hazard switch. Furthermore, directional indicators and windscreen wipers may also be preferably controlled on additional stalks as would a headlamp flasher and windscreen washer controls.

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CLAIMS

1. A vehicle including a visual display unit (VDU) which is arranged in use to display a screen picture including one or more icons, the visual display unit comprising a touch sensitive screen and the or each icon providing on-screen touch sensitive control of a function of a vehicle system.
2. A vehicle according to Claim 1, wherein the or each icon represents and performs the function of a switch means for controlling a feature of its associated vehicle system.
3. A vehicle according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the visual display unit is arranged in use to display selectively a screen picture from a catalogue of screen pictures, each page of which catalogue represents a different system of the vehicle.
4. A vehicle according to Claim 3, wherein the indexing of said screen pictures is displayed in the form of a simulated card index.
5. A vehicle according to Claim 4, wherein selection between said screen pictures is by touch sensitive control of index titles.
6. A vehicle according to any preceding claim, the vehicle system or systems comprising at least one of: in-car entertainment controls; navigation system controls; heater controls; window lift motor controls; fuel filler flap controls; bonnet release controls; and cruise control controls.
7. A vehicle including a visual display unit substantially as described herein with reference to the accompanying drawing.
8. A visual display unit for a vehicle according to any preceding claim.